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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A set of nucleic acids comprising:

a first nucleic acid containing SEQ ID NO:1 or 3, and

a second nucleic acid containing SEQ ID NO:2 or 4,

wherein the first and second nucleic acids are each nucleic acid is 18-40 nucleotides in length and, participate in a polymerase chain reaction, with an Escherichia coli nucleic acid as a template, to generate a nucleic acid containing Escherichia coli open reading frame ECs3459.

- 2. (Original) The set of nucleic acids of claim 1, wherein the first nucleic acid contains SEQ ID NO:1 and the second nucleic acid contains SEQ ID NO:2.
- 3. (Currently amended) The set of nucleic acids of claim 2, wherein the first and second nucleic acids are each nucleic acid is 18-30 nucleotides in length.
- 4. (Original) The set of nucleic acids of claim 3, wherein the first nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:1 and the second nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:2.
- 5. (Original) The set of nucleic acids of claim 1, wherein the first nucleic acid contains SEQ ID NO:3 and the second nucleic acid contains SEQ ID NO:4.
- 6. (Currently amended) The set of nucleic acids of claim 5, wherein the first and second nucleic acids are each nucleic acid is 24-32 nucleotides in length.

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7. (Original) The set of nucleic acids of claim 6, wherein the first nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:3 and the second nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:4.

- 8. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid obtained from amplification of an Escherichia coli nucleic acid template with an upstream primer containing SEQ ID NO:1 or 3 and a downstream primer containing SEQ ID NO:2 or 4, wherein each primer is 18-40 nucleotides in length and the nucleic acid contains Escherichia coli open reading frame ECs3459.
- 9. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 8, wherein the upstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:1 and the downstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:2.
- 10. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 9, wherein each primer is 18-30 nucleotides in length.
- 11. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 10, wherein the upstream primer is SEQ ID NO:1 and the downstream primer is SEQ ID NO:2.
- 12. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 8, wherein the upstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:3 and the downstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:4.
- 13. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 12, wherein each primer is 24-32 nucleotides in length.
- 14. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 13, wherein the upstream primer is SEQ ID NO:3 and the downstream primer is SEQ ID NO:4.
- 15. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid that is 26-1000 nucleotides in length comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs:5-8, or a sequence and sequences complementary thereto.

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16-22. (Cancelled).

- 23. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 15, wherein said nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:5.
- 24. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 15, wherein said nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:6.
- 25. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 15, wherein said nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:7.
- 26. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 15, wherein said nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:8.
- 27. (Withdrawn) A method of detecting Escherichia coli, comprising: providing a sample having a nucleic acid from an unknown microorganism; amplifying the nucleic acid with an upstream primer containing SEQ ID NO:1 or 3 and a downstream primer containing SEQ ID NO:2 or 4, each primer being 18-40 nucleotides in length; and

detecting an amplification product; whereby detection of the amplification product indicates the presence of Escherichia coli.

- 28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 27, wherein the upstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:1 and the downstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:2.
- 29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 28, wherein each primer is 18-30 nucleotides in length.

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30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein the detecting step includes hybridizing the amplification product to a nucleic acid probe that is 26-1000 nucleotides in length and contains a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs:5-8, or a sequence complementary thereto.

- 31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 30, wherein said nucleic acid probe is 26-50 nucleotides in length.
- 32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 27, wherein the upstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:3 and the downstream primer contains SEQ ID NO:4.
- 33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein each primer is 24-32 nucleotides in length.
- 34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 33, wherein the detecting step includes hybridizing the amplification product to a nucleic acid probe that is 26-1000 nucleotides in length and contains a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs:5-8, or a sequence complementary thereto.
- 35. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34, wherein said nucleic acid probe is 26-50 nucleotides in length.
- 36. (New) The set of nucleic acid of claim 1, further comprising a third nucleic acid that is 26-1000 nucleotides in length and contains a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs:5-8, and sequences complementary thereto.
- 37. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 36, wherein the third nucleic acid is 26-500 nucleotides in length.

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38. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 37, wherein the third nucleic acid is 26-200 nucleotides in length.

- 39. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 38, wherein the third nucleic acid is 26-50 nucleotides in length.
- 40. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 39, wherein the third nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:5.
- 41. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 39, wherein the third nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:6.
- 42. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 39, wherein the third nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:7.
- 43. (New) The nucleic acid of claim 39, wherein the third nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:8.